



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

4600 Giant Springs Road
Great Falls, MT 59405
October 1, 2002

FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS COMMISSIONERS:

Dan Walker, 3031 Forsythia Blvd, Billings, MT 59102
John Lane, PO Box 9, Cascade, MT 59421
Darlyne Dascher, HC 65, Box 25, Fort Peck, MT 59223
Mike Murphy, 2401 Recreation Road, Wolf Creek, MT 59648
Tirn Mulligan, Box 694, Whitehall, MT 59759

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

Director's Office	Parks Division
Fisheries Division	Wildlife Division
Regional Supervisors	Lands Section
Legal Unit	

Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Bldg, Helena, MT 59620-1704
Dept of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Bldg, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Fergus County Commissioners, Fergus County Courthouse. Lewistown, MT 59270
Montana Environmental Info Center, Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Dept of Natural Resources, 1625 11th Avenue, Helena, MT 59620
Governor's Office, PO Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
Montana State Library, PO Box 201800, Helena, MT 59620-1800
Montana Wildlife Federation, PO Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Montana Audubon Council, PO Box 924, Helena, MT 59624
National Wildlife Federation, Rich Day, 240 N. Higgins Ave., Missoula, MT 59802
Montana Wilderness Assoc., John Gatchell, PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
Montana Audubon Council, Janet Ellis, PO Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
Medicine River Canoe Club, 3805 4th Ave S, Great Falls, MT 59405
Russell Country Sportsmen, PO Box 282, Great Falls, MT 59403
Pheasants Forever, Craig Roberts, 908 W. Washington, Lewistown, MT 59457
Sun River Watershed, Alan Rollo, 808 52nd St. S., Great Falls, MT 59405

ADJACENT LANDOWNERS AND PUBLIC MEETING PARTICIPANTS:

Leroy Heller, Box 961, Lewistown, MT 59457
Joe Spika, 712 W Main, Lewistown, MT 59457
Chuck Lee, 901 Main St, Denton, MT 59430
Russ Allen, Box 357, Denton, MT 59430
Orville McCracken, HC76, Box 36, Denton, MT 59430
Roger Campbell, Box 365, Denton, MT 59430
Edward Stahl, Box 3140, Lewistown, MT 59457
Ron Melton, HC76, Box 63, Denton, MT 59430
Rod Ronish, 201 Broadway, Denton, MT 59430
William Melton, 712 7th Ave N, Lewistown, MT 59457
R. H. Ronish, Box 12, Denton, MT 59430
Mike Richards, Box 358, Denton, MT 59430
Joe Otte, Box 964, Denton, MT 59430
Kathie Bailey, 712 W Main, Lewistown, MT 59457
James Goettemoeller, HC76, Box 39, Denton, MT 59430
Peter Moe, Box 364, Denton, MT 59430
Gregg Morse, Box 364, Denton, MT 59430
Dwight Davidson, HC76, Box 49, Denton, MT 59430
Mark Gilkey, Box 1042, Denton, MT 59430

*Fergus Co
Miss*

LeRoy Albaugh, Box 324, Denton, MT 59430
Terry Sanguins, Box 458, Denton, MT 59430
Grover Roe, Box 1032, Denton, MT 59430
Rod Boling, HC76, Box 16, Denton, MT 59430
Craig Flentie, 702 Ferwell, Lewistown, MT 59457
Jim Goettemoeller, HC76, Box 40, Denton, MT 59430
Surprise Creek Colony, Box 310, Stanford, MT 59479
Pete Barber, Box 428, Denton, MT 59430
Dwight Donaldson, HC76, Box 49, Denton, MT 59430
Earl Mansfield, Box 856, Denton, MT 59430
John Riley, Box 112, Geyser, MT 59447
Victor Thompson, Box 7, Denton, MT 59430

Ladies and Gentlemen:

You recently received documents (an Environmental Assessment and a Draft Management Plan) relating to the Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks (MFWP) proposal to receive a gift of land from the LeRoy Beckman Estate. This gift of land (fee title) constitutes 196 acres known as the Green Property in Fergus County, Montana. The land is located approximately 9 miles ENE of Denton and is immediately adjacent to the Beckman Wildlife Management Area.

No modifications were made in the documents you received after the public review period. Please consider your previous copies of the Environmental Assessment and Draft Management Plan along with the stipulations of the Decision Notice as final.

Comments received regarding the Beckman Wildlife Management Area Proposal – Green Property Addition are summarized in the enclosed Decision Notice. No changes have been made to the draft Environmental Analysis considering public input. It is my recommendation to receive this gift from the Beckman Estate and include the property in FWP's region 4 Wildlife Management Area program, subject to approval by the FWP Commission. The FWP Commission will be asked to approve the receipt of this land gift at their November 2002 meeting.

Thank you very much for your interest and involvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Aderhold". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Mike Aderhold,
Regional Supervisor

DECISION NOTICE
BECKMAN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
GIFT / ACQUISITION

Green Addition

Prepared by Region 4, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
October 1, 2002

PROPOSAL

Mr. LeRoy Byron Beckman's Last Will and Testament established the RBB Deer Lands Trust Fund to acquire lands for deer and public hunting. Mr. Beckman's Will instructed Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) to assist in locating these lands, and that the lands should be within Fergus, Judith Basin, Cascade, or Meagher Counties; mountain or valley lands; that are partly timbered; that has a stream running through it; and that the lands be comparable in cost to other lands in the area. Mr. Beckman further instructed that after the land was acquired the title and management be transferred to MFWP.

Within the 4 identified counties, MFWP personnel originally completed a thorough examination of numerous properties that were known to be for sale and that might meet Mr. Beckman's conditions. Of them, the Steiners' Trail's End Ranch and the Fertterer Property were the best matches. Their purchases were recommended by MFWP. The RBB Deer Lands Trust Fund purchased the properties in June 1999 and December 2000, respectively. They were then accepted by the Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks Commission as gifts and added to the State's system of Wildlife Management Areas.

Additional property lying adjacent to the new Beckman WMA became available following these purchases. The Green Property complements the original intent and purpose of the Beckman Will by providing additional deer habitat in a manner similar to the original purchases. It features juniper-pine and riparian-river bottom communities and functionally complements the original acquisitions.

Since the Green Property includes juniper-pine and riparian communities, as well as meets the terms of Mr. Beckman's Last Will and Testament, and further builds upon the ability to produce and harvest deer, the MFWP Region 4 Supervisor recommends that the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission accept transfer of fee

title and management of the Property from the RBB Deer Lands Trust Fund, and that the property be added to the Beckman Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS

FWP is required to assess impacts to the human and physical environment under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). The Beckman Wildlife Management Area Proposal – Green Addition and its effects were documented by FWP in an Environmental Assessment.

A 30-day public comment period ran from August 27, 2002 through September 27, 2002. Public notices of the proposed action were placed in area newspapers (Great Falls and Lewistown) and on the MFWP web site and a public hearing was advertised and held at the Denton Community Hall on September 17, 2002. Approximately 50 copies of the Environmental Assessment were distributed to adjacent landowners, sportsmen groups, County Commissioners, and other interested parties at the beginning of the comment period. In addition, representatives of MFWP met with the Fergus County Commission to explain the proposal and answer questions. Adjacent landowners were also contacted and given a copy of the documents (EA and Management Plan).

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held in the Denton Community hall on September 17, 2002 at 7:00 P.M. Two people other than department personnel attended. Those in attendance included a neighbor to the property in question and a cousin of Mr. Beckman.

Hearing officer Graham Taylor explained the format and purpose of the meeting. Copies of the EA and Management Plan were made available. Owing to the abbreviated attendance, only an informal question and answer format was used. No substantive questions or comments were received. Both parties supported the proposed action.

Additional Comments

No written comments were received during the public comment period.

STIPULATION OF THIS RECORD OF DECISION DOCUMENT

None.

MODIFICATIONS TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

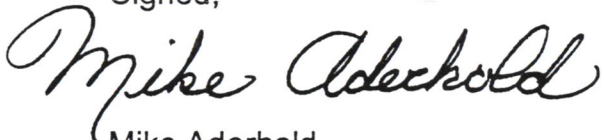
No modifications to the EA or the Management Plan are recommended.

DECISION

Utilizing the Environmental Analysis, Management Plan, and public comment, a decision must be rendered by MFWP that addresses the interests and issues identified for this proposed project. Given results of FWP's analysis coupled with the nature of the public comment, acceptance of this gift of land from the Beckman Estate is warranted.

After review of this proposal and the corresponding public support and comment, it is my recommendation that MFWP receive in fee title the Green Property subject to approval by the FWP Commission. It will be added to the Beckman Wildlife Management Area.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Aderhold". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Mike Aderhold,
Regional Supervisor